

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VANCOU 00219 041642Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CEQ-01 EPA-04

OES-05 FEA-01 INT-05 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 SP-02 /056 W

----- 125888

R 031600Z MAR 76

FM AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2614

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0219

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SENV, CA

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH B.C.'S ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

1. CONGEN ECON OFFICER RECENTLY CALLED ON B.C. S NEW ENVIRONMENT MINISTER, JIM NIELSON, AND DISCUSSED A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS. ON ITEMS OF SPECIFIC INTEREST TO THE US, NIELSON MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:
2. NIELSON SAID PERMISSION TO DEVELOP SAGE CREEK COAL DEPOSITS WOULD BE AN ISSUE BY ITSELF AND WOULD NOT BE USED AS A TRADE OFF. HE SAID NO POLLUTION OF FLATHEAD RIVER WOULD BE PERMITTED.
3. RESOLUTION OF SKAGIT FLOODING QUESTION WILL BE PRIORITY ITEM FOR NEW GOVERNMENT. NIELSON SAID SOCIAL CREDIT GOVERNMENT WOULD DISCUSS MATTER WITH ANYONE AT ANY TIME TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE. HE CLAIMS SEATTLE CITY LIGHT IS THE ONLY PROPONENT OF RAISING ROSS DAM AND THAT THEY COULD PROBABLY BE BOUGHT OFF. HE ALLUDED TO SUCH AN ATTEMPT BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT WHICH ENDED IN FAILURE.
4. NIELSON DISCUSSED WESTCOAST TANKER TRAFFIC IN GENERAL TERMS SAYING THAT THE PUBLIC MUST REALIZE THAT CERTAIN ENVIRONMENT OR ENERGY COMPROMISES MUST BE MADE IF ACCUSTOMED-TO DEVELOPMENT IS TO BE MAINTAINED. HE MENTIONED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY READ A REPORT ON OFF-SHORE UNLOADING FACILITIES UTILIZING

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PAGE 02 VANCOU 00219 041642Z

BUOYS AND WAS QUITE IMPRESSED.

5. NIELSON MENTIONED THAT THE PROBLEM OF POINT ROBERTS HAS NOT GONE AWAY AND HIS MINISTRY IN PARTICULAR IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF UNINHIBITED GROWTH IN POINT ROBERTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. HE IS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT ACCESS TO AND FROM THE POINT. (COMMENT: NIELSON IS THE FIRST PUBLIC OFFICIAL IN BRITISH COLUMBIA WHO HAS NOT REACTED WITH HORROR TO THE SUGGESTION THAT POINT ROBERTS BE GIVEN TO THE PROVINCE).

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ENVIRONMENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, COAL DEPOSITS, FLOOD CONTROL, CARGO SHIPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976VANCOU00219
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760083-0751
From: VANCOUVER
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760397/aaaadhxy.tel
Line Count: 71
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2004 by fisherem>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH B.C.'S ENVIRONMENT MINISTER
TAGS: PINT, SENV, CA, (NIELSON, JIM)
To: STATE
OTTAWA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006